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December 18, 2018

Honorable Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman  
House Committee on Oversight  
101 State House  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Please accept the attached report as the State's most recent update on the RIBridges system, which covers the reporting period November 15, 2018 – December 14, 2018. This document provides monthly updates on the following topics:

- System performance and improvement;
- DHS staffing and employee training;
- Pending applications;
- SNAP timeliness and lobby/Call Center summary;
- CCAP off-cycle payments; and
- LTSS interim payments.

We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of those we serve and your interest in the health of the RIBridges system and the progress made to address outstanding issues. As always, please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CHAWKINS", written in a cursive style.

Courtney E. Hawkins, Director



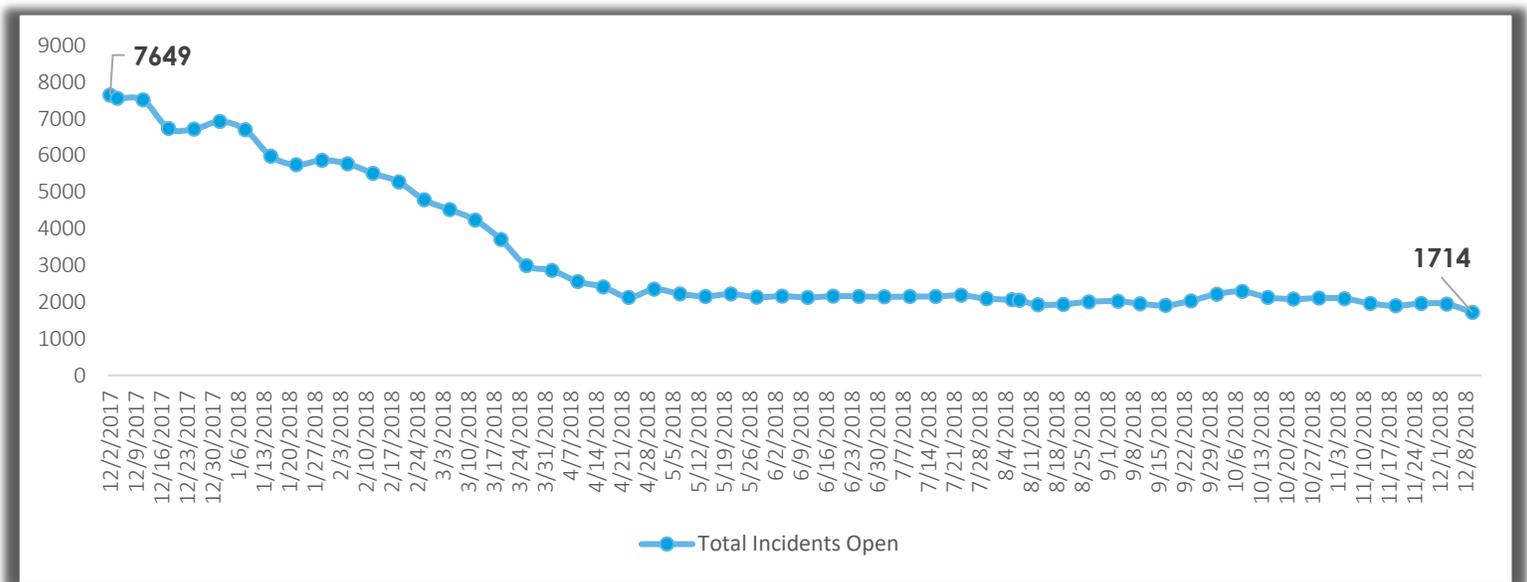
# RI Bridges: Monthly Update

## December 2018

The Executive Office of Health & Human Services coordinates and supports the delivery of programs and services across Rhode Island’s health and human service agencies. Our team takes its charge seriously in promoting health, nurturing quality of life, and being there for Rhode Islanders when needed. Our oversight of work on RIBridges is an important part of the equation. Progress continues to be made on this system. As we move along, we will continue to put the pieces in place to ensure timely access to benefits for Rhode Islanders. This report provides an update on our efforts and progress to date.

### SYSTEM PERFORMANCE + IMPROVEMENT

An important measure of system health and stability is the total number of incidents logged related to the RIBridges system. An incident accounts for any concern experienced in the system that needs to be investigated and, as needed, resolved. IT systems generally require updates and enhancements during their useful life, so an incident number will never hit zero. However, the incident count in RIBridges should gradually decline over time as the system is stabilized. The number of new and existing incidents logged into RIBridges continues to steadily decline. As of December 8, 2018, open incidents totaled 1,714 – a 78 percent decrease since December 2017.



### DHS STAFFING + TRAINING

DHS continues to make progress in strengthening its workforce. Since November 15, 2018, the department hired six employees, with several starting this month. These include:

- One Employment and Career Advisor;
- Two Supervising Eligibility Technicians;
- One Social Caseworker;
- One Customer Service Aide; and
- One Senior Casework Supervisor.



## Training Overview

During this reporting period, DHS facilitated some 57 hours of cross-training for our field office workforce. Trainings included:

- **New Hire Orientation:** The New Employee Orientation (NEO) Program is the first step in welcoming new hires to RIDHS. Its main objective is to familiarize new employees with the organization's structure, policies and procedures.
- **Customer-focused Support:** This training helps employees learn how to triage customer interactions by asking better questions to pinpoint their needs. Learning objectives include: improving verbal and non-verbal communications with customers and learning how to deliver difficult news to customers.
- **Employment and Career Advisors (ECA):** The training helped familiarize Rhode Island Works (RIW) ECAs with the system changes to RIW screens slated for the December 7.24 release.
- **Excel:** This training helps employees improve their Excel-related skills as they relate to daily job functions.
- **Office of Child Services Support:** This training was designed to reinforce the proper way to make the correct referrals and establish a child support case. Learning objectives include: increasing knowledge about the necessity of the new referral process; understanding the difference between cooperation versus non-cooperation; understanding good cause for the custodial parent; and reviewing agency forms.
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** This training covers legal requirements for maintaining the privacy of confidential information, practical ways to protect privacy and security of such information and penalties for violations.
- **Time Management:** Learning objectives for this training include: reviewing time management principles; learning techniques for project and meeting management; practicing mindfulness techniques to relieve stress; and learning time management tools to share with teams.
- **Supervisor Worker Inbox:** This training focuses on supervisor access to the worker inbox and Key Performance Indicators (KPI), dashboard knowledge and tools needed to navigate daily responsibilities. Supervisors were trained to measure the daily workload, using the worker inbox, and assign available staff to complete unassigned work. Supervisors were also trained to monitor escalations, aging tasks, and team productivity using the KPI dashboard.

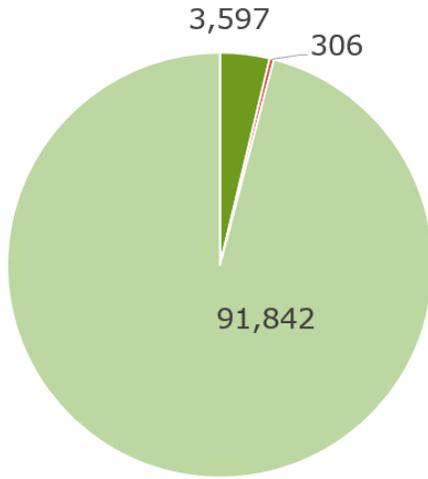
## PENDING NEW APPLICATIONS

	Not Overdue			Overdue			Total
	Client	State	Total	Client	State	Total	
<b>SNAP Exp</b>	6	23	29	1	5	6	<b>35</b>
<b>SNAP Non</b>	467	174	641	12	5	17	<b>658</b>
<b>CCAP</b>	42	64	106	4	10	14	<b>120</b>
<b>GPA Burial</b>	0	2	2	0	32	32	<b>34</b>
<b>SSP</b>	0	38	38	0	11	11	<b>49</b>
<b>GPA</b>	71	16	87	94	20	114	<b>201</b>
<b>RIW</b>	127	101	228	23	50	73	<b>301</b>
<b>Undef. Cash</b>	4	0	4	2	1	3	<b>7</b>
<b>Undef. Med</b>	40	844	884	64	595	659	<b>1,543</b>
<b>MAGI</b>	34	58	92	79	83	162	<b>254</b>
<b>MPP</b>	9	100	109	13	29	42	<b>151</b>
<b>Complex Med.</b>	44	56	100	42	299	341	<b>441</b>
<b>LTSS</b>	61	687	748	137	892	1029	<b>1,777</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>2,163</b>	<b>3,068</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>2,032</b>	<b>2,503</b>	<b>5,571</b>

The State continues to prioritize access to benefits. The number of pending new applications across all programs is 5,571. Overdue pending applications awaiting State action total 2,032.

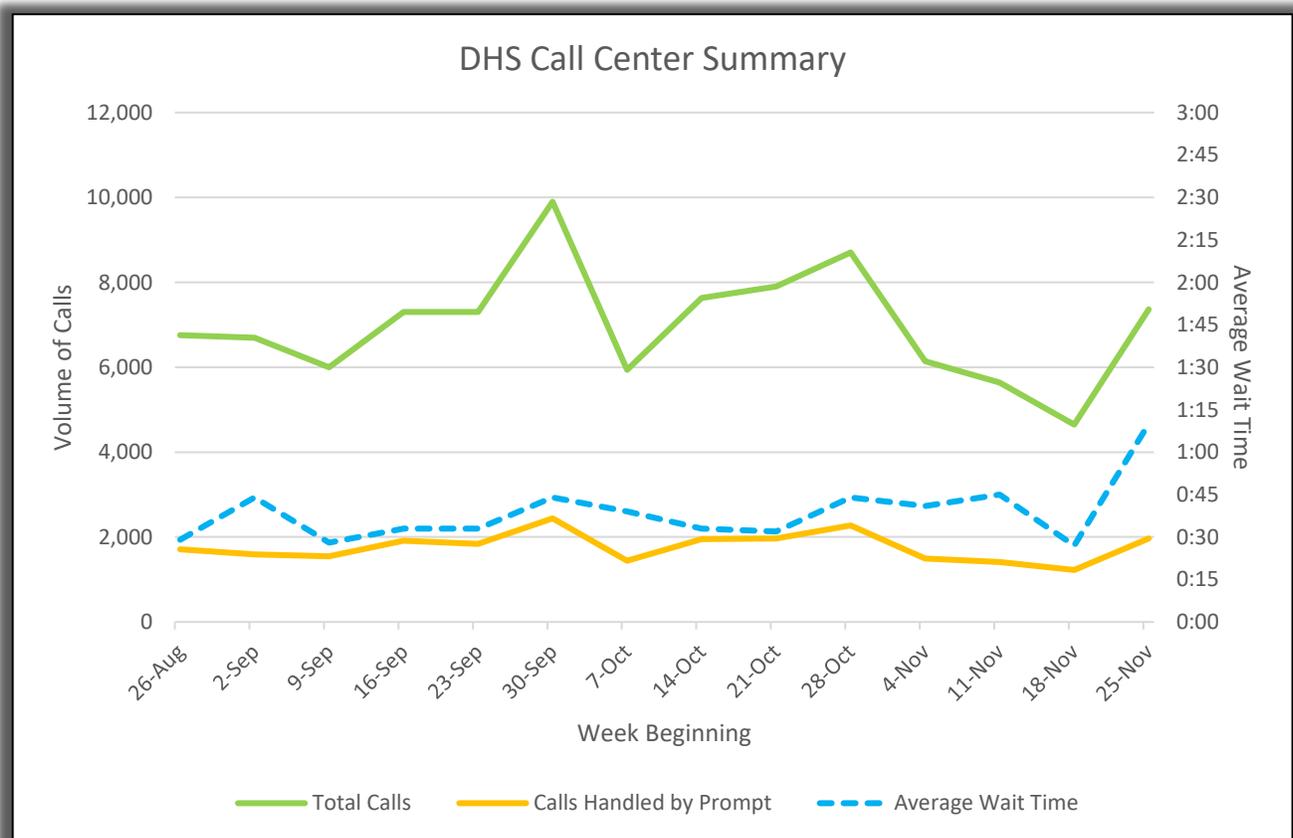
## SNAP TIMELINESS

DHS continues to make progress in improving customer service. According to the Special Master’s report, the combined timeliness for SNAP applications was 94.95 percent (94.1 percent for expedited and 95.8 percent for non-expedited) for November. This is the eighth consecutive month of timeliness over 90 percent.



In November, SNAP benefits were issued to more than 91,800 households. While the number of applications not processed timely represents less than 1 percent of the total SNAP population, the State remains focused on ensuring all customers receive timely access to benefits.

Untimely November Applications | Timely Applications | Total SNAP Population



## CCAP OFF-CYCLE PAYMENTS

Below are the total number of batch payments made to child care providers since the week of November 15, 2018.

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (11 & 11B)	721	\$2,863,893.11
Off-cycle (11B)	34	\$79,197.06
Providers off-cycle/total	4.72%	
Payments off-cycle/total	2.77%	

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (12 & 12B)	726	\$2,784,651.09
Off-cycle (12B)	69	\$49,256.14
Provider off-cycle/total	5.51%	
Payments off-cycle/total	1.77%	

	Providers	Payments
Total Batch (13, 13A & 13B)	741	\$2,946,927.90
Off-cycle (13A & 13B)	47	\$72,625.04
Providers off-cycle/total	6.34%	
Payments off-cycle/total	2.46%	

## LTSS INTERIM PAYMENTS

We continue to make progress in reducing the LTSS backlog of applications. As of this submission, there are 892 overdue LTSS applications pending State action. In December, through the contingency payment process, which ensures nursing and assisted-living facilities receive prompt reimbursement from the State, the State paid out \$1,713,522. Please see the attached payment schedule.

## IAPD PROCESS UPDATE

Per federal requirements, the State has been providing quarterly Implementation Advanced Planning Document - Updates (IAPD-U) to the federal government regarding the status of UHIP and our ongoing funding request. CMS and FNS require 60 days for review and approval for these updates. In the case of the Quarter 2 update, the State submitted a draft update on October 31, 2018 in anticipation of receiving and incorporating comments from CMS and FNS for a final submission in time for approval by January 1, 2019. The State remains on track to receive approval prior to that date.

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH FEDERAL PARTNERS AND SPECIAL MASTER

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) are important partners to the State. We continue to meet regularly to review progress on RIBridges. Below is a list of federal correspondence during this reporting period:

- November 5, 2018: FNS to DHS regarding receipt of FFY 2019 SNAP Management Evaluation (ME) Plan
- November 9, 2018: FNS to DHS on scheduled Management Evaluation (ME) of RI's Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) and Employment & Training programs
- November 9, 2018: FNS request for documentation for RI's Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) and Employment & Training programs



- November 14, 2018: FNS to DHS on scheduling FY18-19 review of SNAP Quality Control (QC) sampling procedures and data management systems
- November 27, 2018: FNS letter approving amended investment plan submitted on May 14, 2018
- December 12, 2018: Quarter 2 IAPD-U Update submitted to CMS and FNS
- December 15, 2018: November 2018 SNAP Application Timeliness report as part of Gemmell agreement

